

Remarks

Claims 35 – 61 are pending. Claims 35 – 61 are presently rejected. By this response, claims 35 – 61 remain unchanged. (Claims 1 – 34 were previously cancelled.) Examination and reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

Claims 35 – 38, 42 – 45, 47 – 51, 55 – 58, and 60 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6866584 (“Michaelson”).

Applicants respectfully submit that Michaelson is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). The pending Application claims priority to U.S. Application Serial No. 09/370648, filed August 6, 1999. Michaelson’s earliest filing date is February 21, 2003, which is after August 6, 1999. Michaelson is not a prior art with respect to the pending Application.

Therefore, Michaelson cannot anticipate the above-identified claims.

Therefore, claims 35 – 38, 42 – 45, 47 – 51, 55 – 58, and 60 are allowable in view of Michaelson.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

Claims 39 – 41, 46, 52 – 54, 59, and 61 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Michaelson in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,871,398 (“Schneider”).

As discussed above, Michaelson is not prior art to the pending Application.

Therefore, the Examiner has not established a proper prima facie case of obviousness. As such, Applicants are under no obligation to submit any evidence of nonobviousness.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 39 – 41, 46, 52 – 54, 59, and 61 are thus allowable for at least the same reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that all of claims 35 – 61 are allowable. In the event that the Examiner believes a telephone interview with the undersigned Applicant's Representative would be helpful in advancing prosecution of this patent application, the undersigned is available for telephone consultation any time.

Respectfully submitted,

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